

Lithuanian Injustices

To the Editor:

"Lithuania's Way Out" (editorial, May 22), urging Lithuanians to forgo independence to avoid spoiling the summit, is akin to urging prisoners in a dungeon not to rattle their chains to avoid disturbing the gala cocktail party being held upstairs.

Lech Walesa, in his speech before Congress last November, spoke of those in the Western democracies who told the Poles 10 years ago not to disturb European tranquillity when they formed the Solidarity movement: "What are those Poles up to, we heard: They are mad; they are jeopardizing world peace and European stability. They ought to stay quiet and not get on everybody's nerves."

I see no difference between the warnings the Poles heard and your advice to the Lithuanians.

Lithuania was forcibly incorporated into the Soviet Union at gunpoint and brutally oppressed for half a century. It has every right to be free. Americans should not pressure Lithuanians to bargain away legitimate rights.

Where is the moral outrage of the news media at the expulsion of the international press from Lithuania? Where is the outrage over arbitrary arrests? Where is the outrage over buildings being occupied by force and an elected representative of the people being bludgeoned by secret police? America's commitment to human rights demands that we stand up and decry these injustices.

By maintaining our position of the last 45 years, that the forceful incorporation of the Baltic states into the Soviet Union under the Hitler-Stalin pact was wrong, and that the Baltic states deserve to be free, we reaffirm our basic values, while keeping pressure on the Soviets to recognize those ideals.

ALFONSE M. D'AMATO

U.S. Senator from N.Y.

Washington, May 29, 1990

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